



Mr. ASTLE on the Tenures, Customs, &c. of his Manor of GREAT TEY. In a Letter addressed to the President.

Read May 22, 1794.

MY LORD,

HAVING observed several singular tenures, customs, and usages, in my manor of Great Tey, in the hundred of Lexden and county of Essex; I conceive that illustrations of the most remarkable may be acceptable to the Society of Antiquaries.

This manor was paramount to, and had jurisdiction over many other manors in very early times. These were held by various Rents and Services, as well civil as military.

The military services were abolished in the reign of king Charles the Second, but most of the ancient rents are still paid. The lords had both courts-leet and courts-baron, wherein they held pleas of different kinds. This manor is of considerable extent, being about seventeen miles in circumference; the lands, which are mostly arable, are remarkably productive, and have long been in a high state of cultivation. The ancient possessors of this estate seem to have considered both convenience and security in the disposal of their lands. On an elevated spot, which commands an extensive prospect over a great tract of country, stood the lord's mansion in the centre of the manor, which was surrounded by a mote; this house was occasionally the summer residence of the lords Fitz-Walter from the reign of king John to that of king Henry VI. Several manors and lands were granted to knights and to free-

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men to be holden of the lords of this manor, on various conditions, and by different rents and services, the most remarkable of which shall be mentioned hereafter.

The free tenants were chiefly placed on the Southern part of the manor, towards the great Roman road leading from Kelvedon to Colchester, or that leading from Coggeshall, to the same place. The base tenants or villani were placed in the Northern part, and were in a great measure surrounded by the lord's demesnes, and by the lords of Bacons and Flories; the lands on the North of the manor are most of them copyhold at this day. On the North-east side of the capital mansion, at the distance of about a mile and a half, stood the mansion house of the lords of *Bacons*, which in early times was a sub-infeudation made by one of the great lords of Tey, to a vavasour or rear vassal. This manor was held by knight's service, homage, fealty, suit of court, a reasonable aid to marry the lord's daughter, and by the rent of £.1. 6s. 6d. payable half-yearly, which is paid at this day by Charles Alexander Cricket, Esq. the present possessor of this estate [a].

On

[a] In the 12th of Edward I. the manor of Bacons was held of the lord Fitz-Walter by Roger Fitz-Richard, by the rents and services above-mentioned. In the reign of Edward III. it was held by the family of Bacon. In the next reign it was possessed by the family of Calthorpe, whose descendants enjoyed it till the 3d of Edward VI. when, on the death of Sir Philip Calthorpe, knight, it descended to his daughter and heir Elizabeth, wife of Sir Henry Parker, knight. In the 5th of queen Elizabeth she and Sir John Woodhouse, her second husband, sold the same to John Turner, gent. from whom it descended to Margaret his daughter and sole heir, who was first the wife of Thomas Smith, esq. by whom she had four sons and six daughters; she was afterwards married to Sir Stephen Poule, knight. On her death it descended to her eldest son and heir, Stephen Smith, esq. whose descendants possessed it till 1724, when Thomas Smith, dying without issue, left them to his niece, Mary Tending, who devised them

On the West side of the lord's mansion, at about the distance of a mile, stands the manor house of *Flories*, which has for ages been held of this manor by knight's service, homage, fealty, suit of court, and by the yearly rent of 11s. 3d. which is still paid [b].

The manor of Uphall is on the South-west part of this manor, which, with its demesnes, came into the possession of the lords Fitzwalter in the reign of king Richard II. when it was absorbed in the paramount manor, and the estate is to this day a part of the demesnes of the manor of Great Tey.

A capital messuage and half a carucate of land, called Trumpington's, was likewise within the said manor. In the 13th of Edward I. Robert de Trumpington held this estate

them to her cousin Thomas Alexander Smith, esq. who, in 1747, devised the same to Charles Alexander, from whom it came to the present proprietor.

[b] This manor was enjoyed by the possessors of the manor of Bacons till the death of Margaret Smith, sole daughter and heir of John and Christian Turner, when her son John Smith had *Flories*, who, November 1, 1645, sold it to William Stebbing, of Great Tey, gent. who, April 29th 1650, with Rose his wife, sold it to Christopher Scarlet, who, by his will dated September 23d in the same year, devised it to his son Thomas Scarlet; but, in 1657, Stephen Smith, esq. commenced a suit against the said Thomas Scarlet for the manor, which suit continued till November 12th 1664, when it was determined they had an equal right, and the courts were held in their joint names. The said Thomas Scarlet, by his will dated December 4th 1705, devised this estate to his nephew Thomas Scarlet, who, April 23d, 1713, sold it to John Little, who held a court jointly with Thomas Smith, August 31st in that year. On the 23d of March, 1714, the said Thomas Smith for a valuable consideration conveyed all his manerial rights to the said John Little, reserving to himself the site of the manor of Bacons, with the demesne lands and the farms thereto belonging. Mr. Little held his court as sole lord of the manor May 2d, 1714. After his death it descended to his daughter Mary, who was first married to Thomas Bridge, gent. and afterwards to — Foster, whom she survived, and by her will devised the same to Thomas Stuck, of Halstead, gent. for his life, and after his decease to Samuel Shaen of Hatfield Peverell, gent. who is the present possessor.

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by the service of finding the king one horse, one sack of canvas, and one broche in his army in Wales, during forty days, at his own charge. By an inquisition taken the 30th Edw. I. it appears, that this estate was held of the king *in capite* [c]. In 1398 it was given to the priory of St. Botolph in Colchester, and after the dissolution it was granted to Lord Chancellor Audeley, and since that time it has been part of the demesnes of the lords of Great Tey.

THE following fiefs were held of this manor by knight's service, homage, fealty, suit of court, and by several rents and services.

Ramsfey Hall. Two-third parts of the manor of Ramsfey Hall in Essex were held of the manor of Great Tey, by the third part of a knight's fee, and by the third part of 10s. payable at the end of every twenty-four weeks for castle ward, and by homage, fealty, and suit of court [d]. *Parker's* or *Roydon Hall.* *Lagenboe* in Essex. The tenement of Avenells in Gamlinghay. The master of Martinage Hall holds the manor of *Martynage* in Gamlinghay in the county of Cambridge. The master of Pleshy College in Essex, held in Pleshy

[c] Morant's Hist. of Essex, vol. II. p. 207.

[d] In an ancient extent of the manor made 12 Edward I. A. D. 1284, it appears, that Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, held three fees in Ramsfey, Gosfield, and Beauchampe, by the farm or rent of xs. payable every 24 weeks. In the 48th Edward III. the countess of Oxford paid to the lord Walter Fitz-walter, lord of Tey, as an aid to marry his daughter three pounds for the said three fees. On the 25th of November, 15th Richard II. ten shillings were paid for Castle Guard, and the further sum of 10s. were also paid on the same account. In the 22d of Henry VI. John earl of Oxford paid at the end of 24 weeks, xs. In the 11th of queen Elizabeth William Ayloff, esq. was distrained for his relief of 100s. due on the death of William Ayloff, his father, for the manor of Ramsfey-hall, held of this manor as a knight's fee, and for a rent of xs. payable at the end of 24 weeks for Castle Guard silver.

half a knight's fee. *Wesley Manor* in Cambridgeshire. *Steeple Morden*, alias Bryse's Fee in Cambridgeshire. The estates called Vernons in Wake's Colne, formerly possessed by Hugh de Crepping, and afterwards by John de Vernon, are held of this manor by knight's service, homage, fealty, and suit of court, under the rent of 3*d.* at Easter, and the like sum at Michaelmas, a pair of gilt spurs at Pentecost or 12*d.* and three pounds of pepper, and one pound and a half of cummin; and the possessor of these estates was to find one man to attend the Justices itinerant in Essex at his own cost.

The lands called Sompnors in Aldham were held by knight's service, homage, fealty, suit of court, and by the yearly rent of 5*s.* and the proprietor was to find one man at his own cost, to attend the Justices itinerant in Essex.

The tenement called Georges was held by knight's service, fealty, suit of court, and paid scutage 20*s.* 6*d.* when scutage was to be levied. Many other estates were held by knight's service of this manor, by homage, fealty, and suit of court; but as there is nothing remarkable in their tenures they are omitted.

In ancient times rents in kind were paid by several of the free tenants within the manor. The Creffield family paid yearly one pound of cummin for certain lands called Cookes, containing twenty-five acres [e].

[e] This family possessed estates in this county in very early times. In the Clause roll of the first of Edward II. A. D. 1307, is a writ directed to Walter de Gloucester, the king's escheator on this side Trent, to grant seisin to Andrew de Creffield of all the lands of his father Robert Creffield, who held of the king's father *in capite*, the said Andrew having obtained his full age, and done homage. The estate called Pope's has been enjoyed by the posterity of the said Andrew Creffield, and descended in the direct line for several centuries until the year 1782, when Edward Creffield, Doctor in Divinity, dying unmarried, devised it to me, I having married the heir general of the family.

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The Upcher family paid yearly a gilly-flower for land called Langley.

The family of Pudney paid annually a red rose at Midsummer, for a cottage and a garden called God-sons. This was probably a gift from a lord to his godson.

The Moteham family paid a quit-rent of 6*d.* and a dish of honey, or 8*d.* in lieu thereof.

There were also other rents, as capons, hens, geese, eggs, and a plough-share, for Collops tenement, two years together, and the third year none, and two seams of wheat within fourteen days after Hallowmas.

The villani or copyhold tenants belonging to this manor were bound by their tenures to plow the lord's land, to mow his grafs, to reap his corn, and to cut underwood in his woods for fire. They were also obliged to make the lord's fences round his woods within the manor, who furnished the materials for making them by permitting the tenants, whose lands border thereon, to enter one rod within the woods, and to cut the underwood for that purpose; and after they were repaired, the tenants were allowed to take the overplus of the underwoods so cut, to their own use; and from this service grew a custom, which prevails at this day, called *rod fall*, which the tenants now claim as a privilege. Many particulars concerning the villain services and customs of this manor are fully exemplified in a survey made thereof in the year 1593, by a jury on oath consisting of forty-eight persons, composed of both free and copyhold tenants, in which survey is inrolled many charters and records relating to the manor.

These villain services are also referred to by several inquisitions remaining in the Tower of London. I shall only mention a few of them. By an inquisition taken in 1326, after the death of Robert Lord Fitzwalter, the jury found that he held on the day of his death, in his demesne, as of fee, the
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manor of Great Tey in the county of Essex, and that there were within the said manor 500 acres of arable land worth 12*l.* 10*s.* *per annum*, the value of each acre 6*d.* and that there were 20 acres of meadow, which were worth *per annum* 60*s.* and 10 acres of pasture, of the yearly value of 10*s.* and 10 acres of wood and underwood, which were worth *per annum* 3*s.* 4*d.* and there were 2000 villain services, called Winter Works, to be performed annually by the base tenants or copyholders of the manor, between the feast of St. Michael and the gules of August, which were of the annual value of 4*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* the value of each man's labour one halfpenny *per diem*; and also 580 villain services, called Autumnal Works, to be performed by the copyholders of the manor, between the gules of August and the feast of St. Michael, which were valued at 48*s.* 4*d.* the value of each day's labour 1*d.* and there were 60 days ploughing to be done by the customary tenants, which were of the value of 30*s.* &c. [f] By this inquisition it appears, that the state of agriculture must have been very low at this period, the arable land being valued at only six-pence *per* acre. The comparative value of the meadow was as six to one, and that of the pasture as two to one. By another inquisition taken 2 Edw. III. after the death of the Lord Robert Fitzwalter, lord of this manor. "Juratores dicunt, &c. "quod est ibidem de servitiis & consuetudinibus villanorum "ij mil. c opera Yemalia que valent iij*l.* vijs. vjd. pretium operis "obolum. Item, sunt ibidem 680 opera Autumpnal' que "valent 48*s.* 4*d.* pretium operis 1*d.* Item, sunt ibidem 60 "aruræ quæ valent 30*s.* pretium aruræ 6*d.* Item, sunt ibi- "dem viij *Aucupes* que valent ij*s.* [g]" By the same inquisi-

[f] By the survey of the manor abovementioned it appears, that in the reign of king Henry V. several villain services were commuted for by rents, which is the reason why many small copyhold estates pay large quit-rents.

[g] Esc. 2 Edw. III. n. 59. A. D. 1328.

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tion it was found that capons, hens, and eggs, were annually paid to the lord.

Several singular customs prevailed in this manor, which appear to be worthy of observation. In one of the manor books I find the following entry.

“Memorandum. Anno Dom. 1618, Robert Audeley, Esq.
 “then lord of the manor of Much Tey, required of the cus-
 “tomary tenants or copyholders, a duty due to him, as he
 “and his steward Ezekiel Rayner affirmed, of forty shillings,
 “called *Onziell*, which of long time had not been paid,
 “and no copyholder could remember any such duty in their
 “time demanded; whereupon the tenants required of the lords
 “a day until the lord’s court next following. The tenants re-
 “teyned for their council Mr. Wakering of Kelvedon, and Mr.
 “Beriffe of Colchester. The lord by his steward then shewing to
 “these counsellors all such rolls as they supposed would have
 “proved that this duty of *onziell* ought yearly to be paid;
 “the counsellors’ answer was, *viz.* That it did appear to
 “them to be true, that in the time of Mungomery, who was
 “then lord of the said manor, his copyholders which held
 “of that manor paid him that duty of forty shillings *per an-*
 “*num*, called *onziell*, during his life, and were still to con-
 “tinue payment of the same, so long as the said manor con-
 “tinued in that blood unfold, (which seemed to them to be
 “the meaning of the word *onziell*); but after his death one
 “Wifeman marrying Mungomery’s widow, and the said
 “Wifeman purchasing the manor of Mungomery’s heirs, who
 “fold the same, the said duty of forty shillings *per annum*,
 “called *onziell*, ceased payment, and so hath continued ever
 “since, as being no such duty due to the lord.”

These opinions manifest, that neither the lord’s steward nor the counsel understood the nature of the claim; for it is
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absurd to suppose, that an ancient right or custom could have been annihilated by an alienation of the manor, but still it was difficult to discover, what this customary payment of *ouziell* or *ouziell* was [b]. On inspecting the old survey of the manor above mentioned, I found, that the word was written *unzeld*, which, in an inquisition remaining in the Tower of London, hereafter to be quoted, will appear to be a tallage, payable by ancient custom, called *unzeld* or *unzeld*, as it ought to have been written; but the Saxon letters having long been disused, the Norman scribes adopted the Gothic *z*, a character which was familiar to them, instead of the Saxon *z*, to them unknown. This word *unzeld* is frequently to be met with in the ancient records, charters, and grants of the Emperors and Princes of Germany, whereby they discharged their vassals from the payment of *ungeldt* [i]. Gaffar in Annal. Augsb. has the following passage, which seems a probable etymology: "Tributa seu collectæ, quas plebs suo idiomate ungeltam, hoc est indebitum appellare consuevit." The people seem to have thought it a payment which ought not to have been made. Skinner, in his Etymologicon, explains this word *insolutus*, which he derives from the Saxon negative *Un* and *Eildan* solve. Somner cites the same word in his Glossary from John Brompton's Chronicle, which is explained unpaid. In Germany this word is still written *ungeld*, *umbgeld*, *omgeld*, *omgelt*, and it is often made synonymous with *tributum* [k]. The inquisition above alluded to, which

[b] At first I supposed that there might have been a custom which obliged the base copyholders to feed the lord's young hawks, for *onziel* or *oifel* is an obsolete French word for a bird, and *oiselet* is a little bird, particularly a hawk, says Cotgrave in his French Dictionary; but this supposition is proved by records to be erroneous.

[i] See Du Cange's Glossary.

[k] See Adeling's German Dictionary, voc. Ungeld.

was taken at Chelmsford in the first year of the reign of king Henry the Sixth. A. D. 1422, after the death of Humphry lord Fitzwalter, shews, that ungelb or unzelb, as it was corruptly written, was a tallage of forty shillings to be annually paid to the lord, according to ancient custom, at the feast of St. Michael [1], which was an arbitrary tax imposed on the base tenants of this manor by one of its ancient possessors before the Conquest, and I am inclined to think so, because the word is Saxon, derived from the Teutonic or German. It is well known, that it was customary for the chieftains among the Germans, and for the great lords in the times of the Saxons, to subject their villani of the lower order to arbitrary impositions. Thus it appears, that the payment of ungelb was a tallage paid to the lords of the manor in ancient times, long before the family of Montgomery acquired it, and therefore it could not have been a personal payment to Sir John Montgomery for his life only, as was suggested by the council.

Many estates in this manor were subject to the *Marcheta Mulierum*, which custom has commonly been supposed to be a right which the lord had, of passing the first night after marriage with his female villain. The best historians of

[1] Inquisitio capta apud Chelmesford, in com. Essex, coram Johanne de Kirkeby, Escautore, Domini Regis, per sacramentum, Johannis Semy, & al'. Qui dicunt, &c. quod manerium de Magna Tey cum pertinentiis, in Comitatu predicto, et alia maneria, &c. in manu domini regis devenerunt, ratione minoris etatis Walteri Fil' Walteri, &c. Et dicunt quod omnia predicta maneria de Magna Teye, ac manerium de Uphalle, &c. tenentur de domino rege ut parcel'. Baronie de Baynard's Castle, per servitium militarie. In quo quidem manerio de Magna Teye, sunt, &c. Et Tallagium custumarium, de quadam antiqua consuetudine, vocat. unzelb xls. solvend'. ad Festum Sancti Michaelis per ann. et placita et perquis. curie, &c. Esc' 1 Hen. VI. n. 56.

Scotland, also Dr. Plot, Bayle, and others [m], as well as several foreign authors, have given many marvellous and indecent particulars concerning this custom, which some writers have asserted was not abolished in Scotland till the reign of Malcolm the Third; but, on diligent inquiry, I am of opinion that this kind of intercourse between the lord and his female villain never existed. Many of the relations concerning this custom are too absurd to deserve attention. The materials, collected by the writers who endeavour to support the opinion above referred to, tend to the establishing a system, in support of which much reading has been misapplied.

I will not trouble your lordship or the Society with entering into particulars, but will proceed to inquire what this custom really was, which prevailed not only in many manors in England, Wales, Scotland, and the Isle of Guernsey, but also on the Continent.

I am persuaded that I shall be able to prove to the satisfaction of the Society, that the *Marcheta* was a compact between the lord of a manor and his villain, for the redemption of an offence committed by the unmarried daughter of his vassal; but more generally it was a fine paid by a sokeman or a villain to his lord, for a licence to marry his daughter, and if the vassal gave her away without obtaining such licence, he was liable to pay a fine. This was sometimes termed *Maritagium*, but that word must be distinguished in this sense, from the same word in its more general import. There are two records quoted by Sir Henry Spelman which explain this custom. *Extenta manerii de Wivenho* (Com. Essex), 18 Dec. 40 Edw. III.

[m] Boethius's Hist. vol. III. p. 35. Plot's History of Staffordshire, p. 278. Bayle's Dict.

“ Ric. Burre tenet unum messuagium et debet talliagium,
 “ sectam curiæ, & *merchet*, hoc modo, quod si maritare vo-
 “ luerit filiam suam cum quodam libero homine, extra villam, fa-
 “ ciet pacem domini pro maritagio, & si eam maritaverit alicui
 “ *custumario villæ*, nihil dabit pro maritagio.”

“ Placita coram concilio domini regis. Term’ Mich. 57
 “ Hen. III. Rot. 4. Suffolk. Johanna Deakeny attachiata fuit
 “ ad respondend. hominibus de Berkholt, quare exigit ab eis
 “ alia servitia, &c. Unde dicitur quod tempore regis H.
 “ (Henry II.) avi regis, solebant habere talem consuetudinem,
 “ quod quando maritare volebant filias suas, solebant dare
 “ pro filiabus suis maritandis duas Oras, quæ valent 32 de-
 “ narios, &c. postea veniunt homines et concedunt quod de-
 “ bent dare *merchetum* pro filiabus suis maritandis scilicet 32
 “ denarios.” Bracton mentions this as a villain custom.
 “ Qui tenet in villenagio talliari potest ad voluntatem do-
 “ mini. Item dare *merchetum*, ad filiam maritandum, & mer-
 “ chetum vero pro filia dare non competit libero homini, inter
 “ alia propter liberi sanguinis privilegium [*].”

The probable reason of the custom appears to have been this. Persons of low rank residing on an estate were generally either *ascripti glebæ*, or were subjected to some species of servitude, similar to the *ascripti glebæ*, the tenants were bound to reside on the estate, and to perform several services to the lord. As women necessarily followed the residence of their husbands, the consequence was, that when a woman of low rank married a stranger, the lord was deprived of part of his live stock; he therefore required a fine to indemnify him for the loss of his property. In process of time this compo-

[*] Bracton, 4. T. I. c. 28. 2. T. I. c. 8. f. 2.

sition was thrown into the aggregate sum of quit rents, as appears by the ancient survey of this manor above referred to.

The following instances extracted from the records of different manors will elucidate this custom, and tend to confirm what has been said concerning it. By the custom of the manor of Brayes, in the county of Warwick, the tenants were not to marry their daughters, or make their son's priests, without licence from their lord. Blount, p. 247, edit. 1784.

A villain in Clymeshond in Cornwall, was not to send his son to school, nor marry his daughter, without the prince's licence; and, when he died, the lord was to have all his chattels. lb. 250.

By the custom of the manors of Thurgarton and Horspoll, in the county of Nottingham, every nief or she villain who took a husband, or committed fornication, paid *marchet* for redemption of her blood 5s. 4d. and the daughter of a cottager half a marchet; and, in Fiskerton and Moreton, in the same county, every she native who committed fornication paid as aforesaid, to the lord, in lieu of *marcheta mulierum*. Ibid. 264. The *marchet* of Howel Dha was the fine for the marriage of a daughter. Ib. 268. In the manor of Brug or Burg, in the county of Salop, when a customary tenant married his daughter out of the manor, he was to pay the lord 3s. Also he was to give for every lierwyte 2s. Ib. 267 [o] Further particulars on the *marcheta* are to be found in Sir David Dalrymple's Annals of Scotland, vol. I. Appendix.

The Guildhall, where the lord's courts have been immemorially held, is an ancient structure, which for several ages

[o] Lierwyte or Lairwyte is from the Saxon Lagan, concubere, to lie together; and *five multa*, a fine imposed upon offenders in adultery and fornication, and payable to the lord of the manor.

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has been granted by copy of court-roll to trustees for the use of the poor of the parish, the lords reserving to themselves the right of holding their courts therein according to ancient usage. Near to the Guildhall there is a field called the Play-field or Playing-place, where the young men exercised themselves in archery and other manly diversions [p]; the herbage is at this day held by copy of court-roll; but, in the year 1727, John Lay, the copyhold tenant, forbid the inhabitants to play in the said field as formerly, and in order to prevent them broke it up, and sowed the same with oats, notwithstanding their remonstrances; whereupon they assembled on Trinity Monday, made bonfires, and diverted themselves as usual, and of course destroyed the oats. Lay indicted them for the trespass, the inhabitants joined issue, and pleaded, that they and their predecessors had used the said field as a common playing place, time whereof the memory of man was not to the contrary, and the cause was tried before Lord Chief Justice Eyre, at the assizes at Brentwood, on Friday August 19th, 1728. The defendants proved, that for upwards of seventy years the young people of Tey, and of the neighbouring parishes, had used the said field as a common playing place every Trinity Monday, which was the time of holding the fair at Great Tey, and they produced an arrow which had been used in

[p] In 11 Hen. VII. A. D. 1496, John Warren surrendered to Robert Knight, and others, the herbage of a parcel of land, containing one rood, for the enlargement of a common playing place; "pro architenentibus licitis, ea intentione per dominum istius maneri ex antiquo sic concessum." Tenend. per annal Redit. 2d. In the 24th of Queen Elizabeth Samuel Moteham was admitted to the herbage and pasture of the common playing place, per Reditum 2d. "Et permittendo architenentes sagittarios, et lufores villæ predictæ ibidem habere uti et gaudere Joca sua, more solito et consueto, absque impedimento seu vexatione, secundum veram intentionem predicti Johannis Warren donatoris inde." Survey of the Manor made 35 Eliz. A. D. 1593.

shooting at butts in the said playing-place above sixty years before, which butts were standing in the memory of most of the witnesses, and that the plaintiff and his predecessors were only admitted to the feeding and pasturage, and that the lord of the manor and another magistrate, refused the plaintiff a warrant against the young men for playing in the said field. The defendants were found not guilty, and the Lord Chief Justice Eyre said, that he did not think an action of trespass would hold, but that the defendants might justify their action of right. Upon the hearing of this cause a question arose, whether townsmen could be witnesses, the Chief Justice allowed of them, because it was not only the parishioners of Great Tey, who had a right to play in the said field, but those of other parishes.

I shall conclude by giving your Lordship, and the Society, a short account of the descent of the manor. In the Saxon times this manor was possessed by earl Alfgar, who was succeeded by his daughter Ælfede, or Ægelfede, the wife of Brithnorth duke of the East Angles, and after her decease by Æthelfede her sister, who was married to duke Æthelstan, on whose death it was given to the monastery of Stoke near Neyland, which was the burying-place of the family, and perhaps, says Tanner, founded by some of them. Earl Alfgar lived in the tenth century [9]. At the time of the Survey it was possessed by Eustace earl of Bologne; from earl Eustace it came to his third son, Eustace, also earl of Bologne, whose daughter Maud brought it in marriage to her husband Stephen earl of Blois, afterwards king of England. King Stephen gave it to his third son, William earl

[9] See the testaments of the two daughters of earl Alfgar, in Wotton's short View of Hickes's Thesaur. London, 1708, 4to. p. 60, 63, and Tanner's Notitia, p. 508.

of Mortain and Surrey, who granted it to Richard de Lucy, Lord of Difs in Norfolk, and Chief Justice of England in 1163, who died without issue male January 14th, 1179. Maud, his eldest daughter, was married to Walter Fitz-Robert, great-grandson of Gislebert earl of Eu in Normandy, who came into England with the Conqueror, and ancestor of the noble family of Fitzwalter. This lady brought Great Tey, and many other estates in the counties of Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk, to her husband Walter Fitz-Robert, on whose death, in 1158, his estates descended to Robert Fitz-Walter his son, whose descendants enjoyed this manor, with other large possessions, till the death of Robert lord Fitzwalter in 1432. Soon after it was possessed by Sir John Montgomery, knight. Sir Thomas his son succeeded him, who died January 2d, 1494, without issue, whereupon his sister Philippa brought this manor to her husband Francis Bryan, esq. who, in 1532, had licence to sell it to Thomas lord Audeley, Lord Chancellor of England, in whose family it continued till the 24th of June, 1704, when Henry Audeley, esq. sold this manor, with its demesnes and dependencies to George Cressener of London. In May, 1771, his son, George Cressener, esq. his Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary to the Electors of Mentz, Triers, and Cologne, and to the Circle of Westphalia, with other necessary parties, conveyed the said manors and estates to

Your Lordship's

most faithful and

most obedient Servant,

THOMAS ASTLE.



*Battersea-Rise,
May 22, 1794.*

